MU Extension Project Coordinator Brings Livable Streets to Missouri

University of Missouri Extension, in partnership with the Missouri Council for Activity and Nutrition (MOCAN), is contracting with the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) to implement the Missouri Livable Streets (MLS) project. The project is funded through a U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) grant. Overall, the project intends to build support for livable streets across Missouri. Missouri Livable Streets will build support by including livable streets language in local plans and ordinances. This will include but not be limited to adoption and implementation of local livable streets policies. By incorporating Livable Street design elements in major and local roadway development and redevelopment projects around the state, project leaders ultimately aim to build support across the state for streets that give all residents safe access to physical activity.

Livable Streets are similar to Complete Streets though the latter focus on the material aspects of the changes while Livable Streets also includes human elements. Livable Streets means different things in different places. Livable Streets encompass a range of design elements such as sidewalks, bicycle lanes and curb cuts as well as street lighting, refuge medians and audible pedestrian signals. These design elements are tangible changes that communities can implement to improve aesthetics and multi-modal use of a street segment. This improved physical connectivity can encourage economic development and increase the social connectedness of people using the (continued on page 2)
streets while improving individuals’ health.

For transportation and planning officials, who think of roads as the medium for moving a person or item from point A to point B in the most efficient way possible, Livable Streets represent a more holistic way of planning and one whose infrastructure encourages a balanced use of motorized and non-motorized modes of transportation.

Trevor Harris is the Project Coordinator for Missouri Livable Streets. Since June he has helped convene the project’s advisory team. This team provides guidance for three areas of work: policy and practice, outreach and communications. As part of the outreach efforts, Harris will convene and facilitate five advocacy training workshops throughout the state in cities and towns that will be considered “champions” of this effort. Being a “champion” means that the community is having public discussion about this or has already begun implementing some of the Livable Streets design elements. Each of the training workshops will consist of local and regional representatives from various sectors including transportation and planning, local government and bicycle-pedestrian advocacy. By having the training workshops in various regions, the goal is that ten communities will incorporate Livable Streets design into their planning process while integrating it into their general operations.

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By the end of the two-year period, the Missouri Livable Streets project will have provided technical assistance in the area of active transportation to 30 communities. To accompany this technical assistance, efforts are currently underway to develop a *Livable Streets Design Manual for Missouri Communities* that will include design guidelines and examples of policies that support active living.

If you are interested in your community being a “champion” community, would like to receive technical assistance in the process of developing Livable Streets, or would simply like more information about this project, please contact Trevor Harris at harristre@missouri.edu or 573-884-8602.

*Special thanks to Trevor Harris, MU Extension, for his contributions to the text and photos for this newsletter.*

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**Other MFH Capacity Building Teams**

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**MFH Healthy & Active Communities—Implementation Team**

**Purpose:**  
The MU Extension Implementation Team provides grantees with assistance in implementing project activities. They are available by phone and email and for meetings in your community to provide program implementation support. Types of assistance might include: program specific assistance on topics such as worksite wellness, farm to school, and starting and sustaining community gardens; recruiting participants for community initiatives; fostering organizational buy-in and support; effectively engaging policy makers; and strategies to build community-partnerships to ensure program sustainability.

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